

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PRS-01  
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 DHA-02 SCA-01 H-01  
DODE-00 VO-03 /057 W  
-----250658Z 104429 /20

P 221515Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2513  
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
USMISSION NATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: CVIS, CSCE, PFOR, SREF, SHUM  
SUBJECT: DIVIDED FAMILIES; POSSIBLE AMNESTY  
  
REF STATE 090667

1. SUMMARY: ANTICIPATING DEPARTMENT'S INTEREST AT THIS  
TIME IN ANOTHER REPRESENTATION ON DIVIDED FAMILIES, EMBASSY  
HAD SCHEDULED A CALL BY CONSULAR OFFICER ON DEPUTY CHIEF OF MFA  
CONSULAR DEPARTMENT HOUZVICKA PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF REFTEL.  
WE THOUGHT THAT IN VIEW OF CONTINUING BILATERAL POLITICAL STRAINS  
A DISCUSSION AT CONSULAR LEVEL WOULD LIKELY BE MORE PRODUCTIVE THAN  
MY MEETING WITH SPACIL. HOUZVICKA OUTLINED TO CONSUL A PROGRAM OF  
LIMITED AMNESTY TO CZECHOSLOVAK POST-1968 EXPATRIATES THAT MAY HELP T  
O  
RESOLVE MANY OUTSTANDING HUMANITARIAN PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.  
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2. ON APRIL 21, CHIEF OF EMBASSY'S CONSULAR SECTION CALLED ON  
DR. JOSEF HOUZVICKA, DEPUTY CHIEF OF MFA'S CONSULAR  
DEPARTMENT, TO INQUIRE ABOUT STATUS OF UNRESOLVED DIVIDED FAMILY  
CASES.  
  
3. CONOFF ASKED WHY SEVEN CHILDREN ON MINISTRY'S LIST OF NOVEMBER,

1976 HAD STILL NOT RECEIVED PERMISSION TO JOIN THEIR PARENTS IN U.S. WHEN GOC HAD UNDERTAKEN TO QUICKLY RESOLVE CASES OF ALL TWENTY CHILDREN ON LIST. HOUZVICKA GAVE NO SPECIFIC REASON FOR THE DEALY, BUT SAID THAT CASES WERE STILL BEING CONSIDERED: NONE HAD YET BEEN REFUSED. HE DID SAY THAT NO CHILDREN WOULD RECEIVE IMMIGRATION PERMISSION IF THEIR PARENTS DID NOT FILL OUT NECESSARY FORMS AT CZECHOSLOVAK EMBASSY; U.S. RESIDENT PARENTS OF AT LEAST TWO CHILDREN (NEMECES) HAD REFUSED TO DO THIS.

4. CONOFF SAID EMBASSY WAS PLEASED THAT GOC HAD ALLOWED THIRTEEN CHILDREN TO EMIGRATE, BUT HOPED THAT REMAINING SEVEN WOULD SOON RECEIVE PERMITS AS WELL. THERE WERE STILL MANY OTHER DIVIDED FAMILY CASES TO BE RESOLVED: A FEW CASES OF JUST CHILDREN WHO WERE NOT ON MFA'S NOVEMBER LIST, AS WELL AS MANY CASES COMPRISING BOTH WIFE AND CHILDREN OF AMERICAN CITIZEN OR PERMANENT REISDENT. HOUZVICKA SAID CASES OF CZECHOSLOVAK CHILDREN WITH BOTH PARENTS ABROAD RECEIVED SPECIAL CONSIDERATION LAST YEAR. MANY OTHER DIVIDED FAMILY CASES SHOULD BE RESOLVED THIS YEAR IN CONNECTION WITH A NEW AMNESTY FOR CZECHOSLOVAK EMIGRES, THE DETAILS OF WHICH ARE TO BE ANNOUNCED BY "MID-JUNE".

5. HOUZVICKA SAID THAT GOC HAD DECIDED TO OFFIER CONDITIONAL AMNEYST TO ALL CZECHOSLOVAK CITIZENS LIVING ABORAD FOR MORE THAN FIVE YEARS WITHOUT FORMAL, LEGAL PERMISSION OF CZECHOSLOVAK AUTHORITI ES.

WHILE EXACT DETAILS WERE STILL BEING WORKED OUT, HOUZVICKA SAID THAT ALL SUCH PERSONS WOULD BE INVITED TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL AMNESTY AT NEAREST CZECHOSLOVAK EMBASSY OR CONSULATE. PROCESS WOULD GENERALLY INCLUDE RELEASE FROM CZECHOSLOVAK CITIZENSHIP, BUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN SOME CASES WOULD INVOLVE LEGALIZATION OF STAY ABORAD AS CZECHOSLOVAK CITIZEN. HOUZVICKA SAID MOST APPLICATIONS WOULD BE APPROVED UNDER NEW PROGRAM WITH EXCEPTION OF EMIGRES ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN INITIATIVES HOSTILE TO INTEREST OF GOC. ONCE INDIVIDUAL AMNESTY IS GRANTED, PROBLEM OF EMIGRE'S CONTACTS AND RELATIVES IN CSSR WOULD BE RESOLVED: EMIGRE'S IMMEDIATE FAMILY IN CSSR COULD EMIGRATE TO JOIN HIM OR HER; RELATIVES IN CSSR COULD VISIT HIM IN WEST AND HE COULD VISIT THEM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, HOUZVICKA SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT THROUGH THIS AMNESTY, CZECHOSLOVAKIA COULD FULFILL ITS HELSINKI FINAL ACT OBLIGATIONS TO FACILITATE HUMAN CONTACTS.

6. CONOFF POINTED OUT THAT AMNESTY PROCESS MIGHT BE LENGTHY, PARTICULARLY CONSIDERING NUMBER OF POSSIBLE APPLICANTS. ACCORDING TO STATISTICS OF US IMMIGRATIONSERVICE, ALMOST 20,000 CZECHS AND SLOVAKS EMIGRATED TO U.S. ALONE BETWEEN 1968 AND 1970. HOUZVICKA ACKNOWLEDGED THIS POSSIBILITY, BUT SAID THAT APPLICATIONS FOR AMNESTY NEEDED FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION AND OTHER PRESSING HUMANITARIAN REASONS WOULD RECEIVE PRIORITY CONSIDERATION. FOR

THIS AND OTHER REASONS, MFA WOULD WELCOME FROM US NEW UPDATED LIST OF DIVIDED FAMILY CASES INVOLVING AMERICAN CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS. MFA COULD THEN CIRCULATE LISTS TO CZECHOSLOVAK ORGANS INVOLVED IN DECISION PROCESS, WITH REQUEST THAT CASES LISTED RECEIVE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.

7. COMMENT: AMNESTY PROGRAM OUTLINED BY HOUZVICKA INDICATES THAT GOC MAY FINALLY BE WILLING TO FORGIVE MANY OF THEIR FORMER CITIZENS WHO FLED TO THE WEST, OR REMAINED THERE, AFTER THE 1968 INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA BY WARSAW PACT FORCES. PROJECTED MID-JUNE ANNOUNCEMENT IS AN OBVIOUS MOVE BY GOC TO COUNTER POSSIBLE CRITICISM AT BELGRADE OF ITS COMPLIANCE WITH CSCE THIRD BASKET AIMS, WHICH WE SHOULD WELCOME AS AN ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR CSCE, IF THE AMNESTY IS NOT TOO NARROWLY DRAWN AND ITS IMPLEMENTED PROPERLY

.  
UNTIL WE HAVE MORE DETAILS ON THE TERMS, HOWEVER, AND SOME EXPERIENCE WITH IMPLEMENTATION, WE CANNOT BE SURE WHETHER THIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ACTION TO REMOVE ONE MAJOR IRRITANT IN CZECHOSLOVAK RELATIONS WITH SOME WESTERN COUNTRIES IS SUBSTANTIVE OR ONLY A PROPAGANDA GAMBIT. WHATEVER THE TERMS OF THE AMNESTY, IT MUST BE KEPT IN MIND THAT THERE REMAIN ELEMENTS HERE, BOTH IN THE POWER STRUCTURE AND IN THE BUREAUCRACY, THAT MAY NOT BE READY TO GO ALONG WITH A DECISION TO "FORGIVE AND FORGET" AND CAN HAMSTRING IMPLEMENTATION OF EVEN THE MOST LIBERAL AMNESTY. IN SHORT, WHILE EMBASSY WELCOMES THE IDEA OF THE AMNESTY, WE WILL HAVE TO SEE IT IN OPERATION TO BELIEVE IT. END COMMENT.  
BYRNE

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## Message Attributes

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